

## Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 161659

EXDIS USSALTTWO

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 3, LINES 6 AND 7 OMITTED)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM

SUBJECT: BILATERALS WITH FRANCE ON SALT PRINCIPLES AND  
THEATER SYSTEMS

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1. SUMMARY: ON JUNE 21, INTERAGENCY TEAM MET WITH FRENCH REPRESENTATIVES (DE LABOULAYE, PAGNIEZ, DE LAFERRIERE, LAUREAU) FOR DISCUSSIONS OF SALT III PRINCIPLES AND PROPOSED US STATEMENT ON THEATER SYSTEMS. SIMILAR BILATERALS SCHEDULED JUNE 22 WITH UK AND JUNE 26 WITH FRG. US EXPLAINED CONTENT AND PURPOSE OF PROPOSED FORMULATION, STRESSING ITS FLEXIBILITY IN KEEPING ALL OPTIONS OPEN, AND INDICATED THAT WE WOULD LOOK FORWARD TO A NAC DISCUSSION IN JULY TO WRAP UP CONSIDERATION OF THE PRINCIPLES AND THEATER SYSTEMS ISSUES WITHIN THE ALLIANCE. SUBSEQUENTLY, IN THE

FALL, WE WOULD PROPOSE TO INITIATE INFORMAL SUBSTANTIVE TALKS, INITIALLY BILATERALLY AND EVENTUALLY IN THE ALLIANCE, ON THE QUESTIONS INVOLVED IN THE POSSIBLE INCLUSION OF THEATER SYSTEMS IN FUTURE ARMS CONTROL, ON AN OPEN BASIS WITHOUT NATIONAL POSITIONS. FRENCH AS ANTICIPATED EXPRESSED UNEASE AT PROSPECT OF NEGOTIATIONS INVOLVING THEATER SYSTEMS, BUT SAID THEY ASSUMED SUCH INCLUSION WAS PROBABLE IN THE FUTURE. THEREFORE, THEY WERE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED THAT ANY FUTURE CONSIDERATION BE IN THE US-SOVIET BILATERAL SALT CONTEXT. THIS MESSAGE SUMMARIZES US POINTS

ON PROPOSED FORMULATION, AND COVERS HIGHLIGHTS OF EXCHANGES WITH FRENCH. TALKS WITH UK AND FRG WILL BE REPORTED SEPTELS. END SUMMARY.

2. CENTERPIECE OF US PRESENTATION, IN ADDITION TO UPDATE ON STATUS OF SALT ISSUES AND SALT III PRINCIPLES, WAS EFFORT TO EXPLAIN OUR PROPOSED UNILATERAL STATEMENT ON THEATER SYSTEMS AND TO RESPOND TO QUESTIONS WHICH WE HAD RECEIVED ON IT SINCE IT WAS PRESENTED TO THE NAC ON FEBRUARY 24. FOLLOWING ARE THE ESSENTIAL POINTS USED IN EXPLAINING US FORMULATION:

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BEGIN US PRESENTATION: AT THE NAC ON FEBRUARY 24, THE US PRESENTED THE FOLLOWING ILLUSTRATIVE FORMULATION ON THEATER SYSTEMS, WHICH THE US IS CONSIDERING MAKING AS A UNILATERAL STATEMENT OF FURTHER OBJECTIVES FOR SALT THREE:

"ANY FUTURE LIMITATIONS ON US SYSTEMS PRINCIPALLY DESIGNED FOR THEATER MISSIONS SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY APPROPRIATE LIMITATIONS ON SOVIET THEATER SYSTEMS".

THIS STATEMENT WOULD BE ISSUED SEPARATELY FROM THE TEXT OF THE SALT TWO AGREEMENT AND THE ASSOCIATED JOINT STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES AND BASIC GUIDELINES FOR SUBSEQUENT NEGOTIATIONS. IT WOULD BE ISSUED BY THE US ALONE, AND WOULD NOT PURPORT TO CARRY ANY SOVIET ENDORSEMENT.

THE PURPOSE OF THE FORMULATION WOULD BE TO SERVE NOTICE ON THE SOVIETS THAT IN RELATION TO ANY DISCUSSION IN FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS OF LIMITATIONS ON US SYSTEMS PRINCIPALLY DESIGNED FOR THE THEATER, THE US RESERVES THE RIGHT TO RAISE SOVIET THEATER SYSTEMS, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME PRESERVING THE FLEXIBILITY TO PURSUE LIMITATIONS ON SUCH SYSTEMS OR NOT, DEPENDING ON WHAT THE US AND THE ALLIES DETERMINE IS IN NATO'S BEST SECURITY INTERESTS.

THE ILLUSTRATIVE FORMULATION WAS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED NOT ONLY TO LEAVE OPEN THE QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT TO PURSUE LIMITATIONS ON THEATER SYSTEMS, BUT ALSO TO KEEP OPEN

ALL OPTIONS WITH RESPECT TO PARTICULAR NEGOTIATING ARRANGEMENTS OR OBJECTIVES. THIS APPROACH WILL GIVE THE ALLIANCE TIME TO CONSIDER IN DEPTH ITS THEATER NUCLEAR FORCE REQUIREMENTS, AND THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF INVOLVING THEATER SYSTEMS IN ARMS CONTROL. PARTICULAR ASPECTS OF THE ILLUSTRATIVE FORMULATION ARE REVIEWED BELOW.

-- TIMING: THE REFERENCE TO "FUTURE" LIMITATIONS, IN THE  
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CONTEXT OF THE TIMING OF THIS STATEMENT AT THE CONCLUSION

OF THE SALT TWO NEGOTIATIONS, WOULD APPLY TO LIMITATIONS AGREED TO SUBSEQUENT TO THAT DATE.

-- TYPES OF SYSTEMS: THE LANGUAGE REFLECTS THE EXPECTATION THAT THE SOVIETS WILL, IN FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS, SEEK LIMITATIONS ON SOME US SYSTEMS PRINCIPALLY DESIGNED FOR THEATER MISSIONS, AND SETS FORTH THE GENERAL PROPOSITION THAT IF SUCH SYSTEMS WERE LIMITED, THEN SOVIET THEATER SYSTEMS OF CONCERN TO THE WEST SHOULD IN THAT CASE ALSO BE APPROPRIATELY LIMITED.

"US SYSTEMS PRINCIPALLY DESIGNED FOR THEATER MISSIONS" REFERS TO THOSE US NUCLEAR DELIVERY SYSTEMS OF THE TYPES, RANGES AND CAPABILITIES BASED PRIMARILY IN THE THEATER, AND COULD EMCOMPASS, AMONG OTHER THINGS, SOME OF THOSE FORCES CALLED FORWARD BASED SYSTEMS. THE LANGUAGE WOULD EXCLUDE US ICBMS, SLBMS, AND HEAVY BOMBERS, INCLUDING THOSE US SYSTEMS OF THIS CLASS WHICH MAY BE ASSIGNED THEATER MISSIONS (E.G., THE POSEIDON COMMITMENT TO SACEUR). WITH REGARD TO CRUISE MISSILES, THOSE VARIANTS WHICH HAVE POTENTIAL APPLICATIONS PRIMARILY FOR THEATER MISSIONS WOULD BE CONSIDERED THEATER SYSTEMS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE STATEMENT.

THE FORMULATION DOES NOT QUALIFY WHAT CLASSES OF US SYSTEMS DESIGNED PRINCIPALLY FOR THEATER MISSIONS COULD BE INCLUDED IN FUTURE LIMITATIONS; NOR DOES IT SPECIFY SOVIET THEATER SYSTEMS ON WHICH LIMITATIONS WOULD BE CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE.

WE HAVE NOT ATTEMPTED, AND WOULD NOT WISH TO ATTEMPT, A  
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RIGOROUS GEOGRAPHIC DEFINITION OF "THEATER". THE "THEATER NUCLEAR" LEG OF THE NATO TRIAD IS A WELL UNDERSTOOD CONCEPT, WHICH COVERS A VARIETY OF SYSTEMS AND MISSIONS, WITH DIFFERENT CAPABILITIES AND BASING, ALL DEDICATED TO

PROVIDING THE ELEMENT OF DETERRENCE BETWEEN NATO CONVENTIONAL AND EXTERNAL STRATEGIC FORCES.

THE FORMULATION IS NOT MEANT TO ALTER THE HANDLING OF NUCLEAR ELEMENTS IN MBFR, WHERE THE OPTION III NUCLEAR OFFER HAS BEEN LINKED TO REDUCTIONS IN SOVIET TANKS.

THE FORMULATION IS NOT INTENDED TO IMPLY ANY POSITION REGARDING THE KIND OF SOVIET RESTRAINT WE WOULD CONSIDER A SUFFICIENT RESPONSE TO US RESTRAINT ON THE ER WEAPON.

-- FORUM: THE STATEMENT REFERS ONLY TO US AND SOVIET SYSTEMS, AND COULD BE MADE AT OR AROUND TIME SALT II AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED AS PART OF A UNILATERAL STATEMENT DEALING

WITH CERTAIN SALT OR SALT THREE-RELATED OBJECTIVES. IT THUS REFLECTS THE EXPECTATION THAT THE SOVIETS WILL RAISE FBS AND CRUISE MISSILES IN FUTURE SALT TALKS. BUT THE LANGUAGE IS DESIGNED TO KEEP ALL OPTIONS OPEN REGARDING THE FORUM FOR POSSIBLE NEGOTIATIONS ON THEATER SYSTEMS OR THE PARTICIPANTS IN SUCH NEGOTIATIONS.

-- TYPES OF LIMITATIONS: THE FORMULATION LEAVES OPEN THE TYPE OR DEGREE OF LIMITATIONS WHICH MIGHT BE APPLIED TO US OR SOVIET THEATER SYSTEMS.

WE CANNOT KNOW AT THIS POINT HOW HARD THE SOVIETS MAY PUSH THE THEATER WEAPONS ISSUE, OR WHAT LIMITATIONS ON US SYSTEMS THEY WOULD SEEK IN EXCHANGE FOR LIMITS ON THEIR THEATER SYSTEMS. SIMILARLY, THE DEGREE OF LIMITATION, IF ANY, ACCEPTABLE ON OUR SIDE WILL BE DETERMINED BY CALCULATION OF OUR MILITARY REQUIREMENTS AND THE POSSIBILITIES  
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FOR OBTAINING SIGNIFICANT LIMITS ON SOVIET SYSTEMS.

THE PHRASE "ACCOMPANIED BY APPROPRIATE LIMITATIONS" MEANS THAT FUTURE LIMITATIONS THE US MIGHT BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT ON US SYSTEMS PRINCIPALLY DESIGNED FOR THEATER MISSIONS E.G., RANGE, GEOGRAPHIC, NUMERICAL SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY COMMENSURATE, BUT NOT NECESSARILY IDENTICAL, LIMITATIONS ON SOVIET THEATER SYSTEMS. THE CHARACTER OF THE LIMITATIONS ON SOVIET SYSTEMS WHICH WOULD BE "APPROPRIATE" WOULD DEPEND, IN PART, ON AN EVALUATION OF THE IMPACT ON US THEATER CAPABILITIES OF THE LIMITATIONS ON US SYSTEMS WHICH WE MIGHT BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT.

IT SHOULD ALSO BE RECOGNIZED THAT OUR ABILITY TO NEGOTIATE SIGNIFICANT LIMITATIONS ON SOVIET SYSTEMS OF CONCERN TO US WILL DEPEND NOT ONLY ON WHAT US SYSTEMS WE MIGHT BE PREPARED TO SEE LIMITED, BUT ALSO ON THE STRINGENCY OF THE LIMITS, E.G., ON NUMBERS OR RANGE, WE WERE WILLING TO

ACCEPT. END US PRESENTATION.

3. FRENCH INDICATED HIGH LEVEL GOF BELIEF THAT, GIVEN GERMAN CONCERNS AND GENERAL SITUATION, IT WAS PROBABLE THAT THERE WOULD BE FUTURE CONSIDERATION OF THEATER SYSTEMS IN ARMS CONTROL. HOWEVER, GIVEN THIS ASSUMPTION, IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT ANY CONSIDERATION OCCUR IN SALT III, AND NOT IN AN AD HOC FORUM. DE LABOULAYE SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS WAS NOT NECESSARILY THE GERMAN VIEW, THAT THIS MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR THE US TO TAKE A CLEAR POSITION.

DE LABOULAYE QUESTIONED THE NEED FOR THE PROPOSED US STATEMENT, SINCE THERE WOULD BE A PROVISION IN THE PRIN-

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CIPLES PERMITTING PARTIES TO RAISE ANY ISSUE, AND GIVEN THE RISK OF APPEARING TO COMMIT THE US MORE DEFINITELY TO NEGOTIATIONS ON THEATER SYSTEMS THAN NECESSARY. US SIDE EXPLAINED THAT, BECAUSE CRUISE MISSILE LIMITS WERE INCLUDED IN THE PROTOCOL, AND BECAUSE PROTOCOL ISSUES WOULD HAVE TO BE ADDRESSED IN SALT III, IT WAS NOT ADEQUATE SIMPLY TO POINT TO OUR ABILITY TO RAISE ANY ISSUE IN SALT III. TO PROTECT OUR NEGOTIATING POSITION ON PROTOCOL ISSUES, SUPPORT SALT RATIFICATION, AND MEET GERMAN CONCERNS, IT WAS IMPORTANT TO HAVE A COUNTERPART ON THE TABLE TO MATCH THE FACT OF INCLUSION OF CRUISE MISSILE LIMITS IN THE PROTOCOL. FRENCH NOTED THAT US HAD ALWAYS IN THE PAST REJECTED SOVIET EFFORTS TO INCLUDE FBS IN NEGOTIATIONS, AND THAT THIS HAD CREATED A STRONG NEGOTIATING HISTORY; WHY DID WE NEED TO SAY ANYTHING ADDITIONAL? US INDICATED THAT PROPOSED STATEMENT WAS MORE POINTED THAN OUR EARLIER STATEMENTS. MOREOVER, IT WAS

NECESSARY TO GO BEYOND EARLIER STATEMENTS, SINCE WE HAD IN PRACTICE ALREADY AGREED TO THE INCLUSION OF CRUISE MISSILES IN THE PROTOCOL, WHICH COULD NOT THEREFORE BE OFFSET BY THE TRADITIONAL FBS STATEMENT. US INDICATED, MOREOVER, THAT PROPOSED STATEMENT WOULD BE A MARKER THAT SOVIETS COULD NOT EXPECT THAT IT WOULD BE EASY TO NEGOTIATE TRADE OF US THEATER SYSTEMS AGAINST SOVIET CENTRAL SYSTEMS.

DE LABOULAYE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THE POLITICAL REQUIREMENT FOR SUCH A STATEMENT. HE WONDERED, HOWEVER, WHETHER IT MIGHT NOT BE BETTER NOT TO MAKE IT AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, BUT RATHER TO AWAIT THE INITIATION OF THE RATIFICATION PROCESS. IF, HYPOTHETICALLY, RATIFICATION DID NOT BEGIN UNTIL THE SPRING, THAT WOULD GIVE THE ALLIANCE MORE TIME TO DECIDE SUBSTANTIVELY WHAT IT WANTED TO DO ON THEATER SYSTEMS, AND WE WOULD THUS BE IN A BETTER

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POSITION TO SHAPE A PRECISE STATEMENT. US AGREED TO CONSIDER THE SUGGESTION ON TIMING, ALTHOUGH IT INDICATED THAT THERE MIGHT BE REASONS WHY A STATEMENT OF THIS KIND SHOULD BE MADE CLOSE TO SIGNATURE, IF IT WAS TO ACCOMPLISH ITS PURPOSE OF OFFSETTING THE PROTOCOL CRUISE MISSILE PROVISIONS. US ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE NEED FOR DETAILED CONSIDERATION OF THE FORMULATION WOULD BE GREATER IN THE CASE OF A STATEMENT WHICH PREJUDICED POSITIONS ON THEATER NEGOTIATIONS, WHEREAS OUR PROPOSED FORMULATION WAS DELIBERATELY DESIGNED TO PROTECT ALL POSITIONS.

DE LABOULAYE ASKED, RHETORICALLY, WHETHER THE US STATEMENT WOULD CREATE A SITUATION WHERE, IF THE SOVIETS DID NOT

SEEK LIMITS ON US SYSTEMS PRINCIPALLY DESIGNED FOR THEATER MISSIONS, IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR THE US TO SEEK LIMITS ON SOVIET SYSTEMS? IF SO, WOULD THE US CONSIDER ADDING A SENTENCE EXPLICITLY HOLDING OPEN THE RIGHT TO SEEK LIMITS ON SOVIET SYSTEMS? US EXPLAINED THAT WE DID NOT VIEW THE SENTENCE AS PRECLUDING OUR RAISING SOVIET SYSTEMS, SHOULD WE DECIDE TO DO SO; THE QUESTION, HOWEVER, WAS MOOT, IN THAT WITH CRUISE MISSILES IN THE PROTOCOL THE SOVIETS WERE ALMOST CERTAIN TO RAISE AT LEAST THOSE US SYSTEMS. MOREOVER, WE HAD DESIGNED OUR STATEMENT SO AS NOT TO COMMIT US TO NEGOTIATIONS, IF WE DECIDED THEY WERE NOT IN OUR INTEREST, AND A MORE DIRECT STATEMENT OF INTEREST IN SOVIET SYSTEMS MIGHT BE SEEN AS EXPRESSING MORE OF A DESIRE TO NEGOTIATE ON THEATER SYSTEMS THAN WE INTENDED. DE LABOULAYE SAID HE AGREED, BUT THOUGHT THE SAME ARGUMENTS MIGHT ALSO APPLY AGAINST THE BASIC FORMULATION.

FRENCH ALSO INDICATED UNEASE WITH USE OF "THEATER" AND "THEATER MISSION" TO DESCRIBE SYSTEMS OF INTEREST, SUG-  
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GESTING THAT THIS COULD LEAD TO DISCUSSION OF THE DEFINITION OF THEATER ARMS AND POSSIBLE CONSIDERATION OF A THEATER EQUILIBRIUM, WHICH WOULD BE DANGEROUS. US ASSURED GOF IT SHARED CONCERN THAT NOTHING BE DONE TO FOCUS ON A SEPARATE BALANCE, AND INDICATED IT WAS OPEN TO SUGGESTIONS ON WORDING. BRIEF DISCUSSION, HOWEVER, FAILED TO IDENTIFY ANY ACCEPTABLE SUBSTITUTE. US INDICATED THAT "THEATER" HAD THE ADVANTAGE OF FAMILIARITY, AND A CLEAR PLACE IN NATO DOCTRINE. FRENCH SUGGESTED "MEDIUM RANGE", WHICH US INDICATED COULD BE EITHER TOO INCLUSIVE, IN THAT THERE ARE SOME CENTRAL STRATEGIC SYSTEMS WHICH HAVE LIMITED RANGES, E.G., SOME SLBMS, OR INSUFFICIENTLY INCLUSIVE, IN THAT BECAUSE OF GEOGRAPHIC DISPARITIES, THE SOVIET UNION COULD

THREATEN WESTERN EUROPE WITH ESSENTIALLY SHORT RANGE SYSTEMS, WHILE THE WESTERN SIDE COULD NOT EVEN REACH SOVIET TERRITORY WITH SYSTEMS OF SIMILAR RANGES. ANOTHER FRENCH SUGGESTION, TO REFER TO "SYSTEMS NOT LIMITED IN SALT II TREATY" WOULD, US POINTED OUT, BE INADEQUATE BECAUSE CRUISE MISSILE LIMITS ARE IN THE PROTOCOL, AND THE PROTOCOL WAS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE SALT II AGREEMENT FOR LEGAL AND RATIFICATION PURPOSES.

4. FOLLOWING DISCUSSION OF US FORMULATION, FRENCH CE OF PRESSED INTEREST IN INFORMAL EXPLORATION OF SUBSTANCE OF THEATER ISSUES, AND SOUGHT US ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF SOVIET THEATER NUCLEAR MODERNIZATION, STATUS OF THE WORK OF THE NPG HIGH LEVEL GROUP, AND US THEATER NUCLEAR MODERNIZATION PLANS. US OUTLINED ONGOING AND PROJECTED MODERNIZATION OF NATO FORCES, AND SOVIET PROGRAMS INCLUDING SS-20 AND BACKFIRE. FRENCH ASKED WHETHER SS-20

SHOULD BE INTERPRETED AS SIMPLY MODERNIZATION OF OBSOLETE SYSTEMS; AS AN EFFORT TO DEVELOP NEW CAPABILITIES INCLUDING ACCURACY, FLEXIBILITY, AND SURVIVABILITY; OR AS A NEW DOCTRINAL DIRECTION, NOW THAT STRATEGIC FORCES WERE CONSTRAINED IN SALT. US INDICATED THAT ALL THREE ASPECTS  
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COULD BE PRESENT IN SOVIET THINKING; CERTAINLY MODERNIZATION WAS TO BE EXPECTED, AND THE NEW CAPABILITIES WERE IMPORTANT. ON THE LAST POINT HOWEVER, THE SOVIETS HAD SAID NOTHING TO INDICATE THEY HAD A SPECIAL DESIRE TO SINGLE OUT WESTERN EUROPE, AS SCHMIDT HAS FEARED. HOWEVER, SOVIETS

OBSVIOUSLY HAVE A CONTINUING NEED TO BE ABLE TO THREATEN EUROPE, TO MAINTAIN A CAPABILITY WHICH THE EUROPEANS MUST RECKON WITH.

US SUMMARIZED HLG DISCUSSIONS, HLG JUDGEMENT THAT AN EVOLUTIONARY ADJUSTMENT WAS IN ORDER IN NATO TNF POSTURE, AND THAT THERE WOULD NOW BE AN EVALUATION OF THE ISSUES INVOLVED IN CONSIDERING SUCH AN ADJUSTMENT. GIVEN FRENCH INTEREST, US SAID IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO KEEP THEM INFORMED OF ON-GOING HLG WORK AND TO GET THEIR VIEWS. IN THE FALL, US SAID IT WAS THINKING OF INITIATING BILATERALS ON THE ISSUES INVOLVED IN THE POSSIBLE INCLUSION OF THEATER SYSTEMS IN ARMS CONTROL. THESE DISCUSSIONS WOULD HAVE TO MOVE IN PARALLEL WITH THE HLG'S WORK ON THE THEATER POSTURE.

FRENCH ASKED WHETHER, IN CONSIDERING POSSIBLE ADJUSTMENTS TO THE NATO POSTURE IN THE DIRECTION OF MORE LONGER RANGE SYSTEMS, POTENTIALLY CAPABLE OF STRIKING THE SOVIET UNION, WE WOULD BE CONTRAVENING THE NON-CIRCUMVENTION PROVISIONS

OF SALT III. US SAID THAT, ALTHOUGH SOVIETS HAD TRIED SINCE THE BEGINNING OF SALT TO PUSH A DEFINITION OF "STRATEGIC" WHICH WOULD FORCE US TO INCLUDE OR COMPENSATE FOR FBS, WE HAD ALWAYS REJECTED ANY COVERAGE OF FBS, OR THE NOTION THAT CHANGES IN FBS WOULD BE AUTOMATICALLY  
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VULNERABLE TO A CHARGE OF CIRCUMVENTION. US SAID THAT OBVIOUSLY A RADICAL SHIFT IN THE LOCUS OF OUR STRATEGIC FORCES WOULD RAISE PROBLEMS, TOTALLY APART FROM ANY NON-CIRCUMVENTION PROVISION IN THE SALT II TEXT. HOWEVER, SOME INCREASE AND CHANGES IN FORCES IN EUROPE WOULD NOT BE PRECLUDED, AND WE HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THE CIRCUMVENTION QUESTION IN THE CONTEXT OF CONSIDERING THE ADJUSTMENT OF THE NATO POSTURE TO INCLUDE MORE LONGER RANGE SYSTEMS.

REVIEWING ARGUMENTS ABOUT THE POSSIBLE SOVIET ADVANTAGE FROM THE SS-20, US INDICATED IT DID NOT PLACE MUCH CREDENCE IN NOTION THAT SOVIETS COULD USE IT FOR A MASSIVE DISARMING STRIKE AGAINST WESTERN EUROPE. THERE WAS TOO GREAT A LIKELIHOOD THAT IT WOULD LEAD TO USE OF US STRATEGIC FORCES, AS PART OF NATO DOCTRINE. AND ONE GOAL OF MODERNIZATION PROGRAMS WAS TO IMPROVE SURVIVABILITY OF NATO FORCES. DE LABOULAYE SAID THAT THE CONNECTION OF THE THEATER AND STRATEGIC FORCES IN NATO DOCTRINE SERVED TO CONVINCE HIM EVEN MORE OF THE NEED TO ENSURE THAT ANY NEGOTIATIONS ON THEATER FORCES SHOULD TAKE PLACE ONLY IN SALT. US NOTED THAT BASED ON HLG DISCUSSIONS, THERE MIGHT BE AN INCREASE IN THE POTENTIAL EUROPEAN BASED RESPONSE TO SOVIET THEATERS. IN ANY CASE, IT WAS NOT CLEAR THAT THERE WAS A NECESSARY PARALLELISM BETWEEN THE FORCE POSTURE AND A POSSIBLE FORUM FOR ARMS CONTROL. US AGREED THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO CONCEPTUALIZE A SEPARATE NEGOTIATION, BUT ASKED WHETHER THE SOVIETS WOULD ACCEPT CONFINING THE SUBJECT TO SALT. US NOTED LIMITED SIGNS THAT THE SOVIETS MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN CONSIDERING THEATER SYSTEMS, FOLLOWING THE BREZHNEV-SCHMIDT TALKS. IF THIS WERE SO, SOVIET MOTIVE FOR SUCH A MAJOR SHIFT IN POSITION MIGHT BE DESIRE TO FREEZE THE SITUATION IN EUROPE AT A POINT FAVORABLE TO ITSELF, BEFORE THE WEST INTRODUCED SIGNIFICANT CHANGES. IN SUCH A CASE, IT MIGHT NOT WANT TO CONFINED THE FREEZE TO THE US, BUT MIGHT WANT TO CON-  
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STRAIN THE UK AND FRANCE AS WELL.

IN DISCUSSION OF SALT III PRINCIPLES, FRENCH WERE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN POSSIBILITY OF US SEEKING LIMITS ON SOVIET AIR DEFENSE, AND DEGREE OF SOVIET RESISTANCE



TO THAT POINT. PAGNIEZ ARGUED THAT AIR DEFENSE WAS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT AGAINST SYSTEMS WHICH MIGHT BE DEPLOYED IN EUROPE, E.G., CRUISE MISSILES AND AIRCRAFT, AND THUS SOVIET AIR DEFENSE WOULD HAVE TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN CONSIDERING HOW TO HANDLE THE THEATER POSTURE QUESTION ON THE WESTERN SIDE. DE LABOULAYE SAID THAT, BECAUSE OF IMPORTANCE OF AIR DEFENSE FOR EUROPEAN INTERESTS, US SHOULD PRESS FOR ITS INCLUSION IN SALT III.

5. IN CONCLUSION, US INDICATED THAT WE WOULD PLAN TO SCHEDULE A NAC IN JULY TO REVIEW THE PROPOSED FORMULATION ON THEATER SYSTEMS AND THE TACTICS FOR ITS POSSIBLE USE; THAT WE WOULD LOOK FORWARD TO SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS IN THE FALL, AND WOULD BE PREPARING DISCUSSION PAPERS; WE WOULD HOPE THE FRENCH WOULD DO SO ALSO, SO THAT WE COULD BENEFIT FROM THEIR DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE. VANCE

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